

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ACQUISITION TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
POLICY**

20 Jul 2001

1. REFERENCES

- a. Public Law 101-510, National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1991, "Title XII Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act," November 5, 1990.
- b. DoD Directive 5000.52, "Defense Acquisition Education, Training, and Career Development Program," October 25, 1991.
- c. DoD 5000.52M, "Career Development Program for Acquisition Personnel," November 25, 1991, authorized by DoD Directive 5000.52, October 25, 1991.
- d. DoD Directive 5000.57, "Defense Acquisition Workforce," October 22, 1991.
- e. DoD Instruction 5000.58, "Defense Acquisition Workforce," January 14, 1992.
- f. DoD Instruction 5000.55, "Reporting Management Information on DoD Military and Civilian Acquisition Personnel and Position," November 1, 1991.
- g. Title 5, Chapter 41, United States Code.
- h. Defense Acquisition University Catalog (current issue).
- i. DA Regulation 690-400, Chapter 410, Training.
- j. Part 410 of Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations.
- k. Federal Personnel Manual Bulletin 410-132, May 28, 1992.

2. SCOPE

This Army Acquisition Tuition Assistance Program (ATAP) Policy applies to all individuals who meet the requirements set forth in the References.

3. BACKGROUND

Title XII of Public Law 101-510, "National Defense Authorization Act for FY 1991, Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA), November 5, 1990," amended the training law, 5 U.S.C., chapter 41, by providing in 5 U.S.C., chapter 4107 and part 410 of title 5 code of Federal Regulations, provisions whereby agencies may authorize training leading to an academic degree in occupations of anticipated shortage of qualified personnel. DAWIA states a shortage will exist in acquisition personnel throughout the Department of Defense (DoD) until September 30, 2001. House Authorization Bill, Section 1103 – Continuation of Tuition

Reimbursement and Training for certain acquisition personnel amends section 1745 of title 10, United States Code, to extend the “shortage of personnel” designation for qualified civilian acquisition personnel of the DoD until September 30, 2005. These policies and procedures implement the ATAP within the Department of the Army (DA).

4. APPLICABILITY

- a. The ATAP is available for civilian Army Acquisition and Technology Workforce (A&TWF) members who wish to complete an undergraduate degree or fulfill the business hour requirement cited in reference a of this document. ATAP may be used to complete either 24 semester credit hours (or equivalent) from among the following disciplines: accounting, business finance, law, contracts, quantitative methods, and organization and management; or 24 semester credit hours (or equivalent) in the member’s career field and 12 semester hours in the disciplines cited above. ATAP is also available for civilian Army Acquisition Corps (AAC), Corps Eligible (CE) members, level III certified, interested in pursuing graduate study in a business, scientific, or technical specialty, as cited in reference a and outlined in DoD Directive 5000.52M. ATAP is not authorized for education beyond the master’s degree level. ATAP funding may only be used for study at accredited colleges or universities within the member’s local commuting area. Classes outside the local commuting area must be approved by the Deputy Director, Acquisition Career Management (DDACM). Classes will be taken during nonduty hours, unless the participant’s organization approves class attendance during duty hours.
- b. To be eligible for ATAP funding benefits, an applicant must currently be a member of the A&TWF. If the applicant is NOT currently occupying an acquisition position (even if a previous AAW/AAC member), he/she is not entitled to ATAP training benefits. If the ATAP participant was previously approved for ATAP funding and subsequently moves to a nonacquisition billet, or the encumbered billet is changed to nonacquisition, the ATAP student is no longer eligible for ATAP funding.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. **DDACM.** The DDACM has oversight and control of the ATAP Policy and Procedures. The DDACM may delegate the responsibility for developing and implementing the policy and procedures to the Director, Acquisition Career Management Office (ACMO).
- b. **ACMO**
 - (1) Responsible for the development and management of the programs that provide for the education, training, and career progression of A&TWF members.
 - (2) Develops and issues the ATAP policy and procedures.
 - (3) Provides oversight of the ATAP.
 - (4) Responsible for organizing and conducting the ATAP Selection Board. Serves as final approval authority for employees accepted to participate in the program and provides results to the NCR CSO.

- (5) Directs correspondence with ATAP applicants/participants.

c. **National Capital Region Customer Support Office (NCR CSO)**

- (1) Implement ATAP for the A&TWF.
- (2) Ensure widest dissemination of information on ATAP announcements and information.
- (3) Provide customer assistance on all aspects of ATAP.
- (4) Review application packages for requirements.
- (5) Return incomplete application packages with an explanation of what is required.
- (6) Provide periodic reports to the ACMO as required.
- (7) Track the progress of each ATAP student in the Career Acquisition Personnel & Position Management Information System (CAPPNIS) database ensuring that grade levels (“C” undergraduate or “B” graduate) are maintained and that changes to schedules or funding requirements are approved.

d. **Acquisition Career Managers (ACMs)**

- (1) Provide customer assistance on all aspects of ATAP.
- (2) Ensure widest dissemination of information on ATAP.

e. **Army Acquisition Executive Support Agency (AAESA)**

- (1) Maintain funding status for ATAP and provide the ACMO with periodic reports on funding levels.
- (2) Provide the funding information associated with each ATAP participant as required by the ACMO.
- (3) Process each ATAP funding document.

f. **ATAP Participants**

- (1) Apply for admission to nationally or regionally accredited schools.
- (2) Submit applications and supporting documentation as outlined in ATAP announcements and information on the DACM Web site <http://asc.rdaisa.army.mil>. A separate application must be provided for each opportunity (e.g., 12-24 semesters hours of business, bachelor’s degree, or master’s degree).

(3) All communications regarding ATAP issues should be directed to the NCR CSO. Coordination with the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center/local training coordinators is not required under this policy.

(4) Exhaust entitlements under other federal programs, such as veterans' educational benefits, prior to applying for tuition assistance under the ATAP.

(5) Attain a grade of at least a "B" in graduate courses and "C" in undergraduate courses.

(6) Provide final course grades to the NCR CSO within 60 days of course completion. Failure to provide grade information may result in loss of future funding or removal from the program.

(7) Follow reimbursement procedures, as outlined in USC, Title 5, 4101-4118, to reimburse the government for classes with an incomplete grade, withdrawal, or grade below "B" in graduate courses and "C" in undergraduate courses, or departure from federal government service. All reimbursements for ATAP will be completed through AAESA.

(8) Ensure that first-line supervisors are made aware of academic or other problems that might interfere with success in the educational process.

(9) Select courses from among approved program of study. When planned courses are canceled, conflict with other courses, or are unavailable, provide appropriate substitutes to the NCR CSO.

(10) Notify the NCR CSO immediately when a change in employment no longer qualifies you for program participation.

(11) In coordination with your supervisor, develop a five-year Individual Development Plan (IDP) that lists all courses to be funded by ATAP.

(12) Read and follow the information outlined in the ATAP Procedures.

g. Organization

(1) Be aware of the individual's application for ATAP and ensure individual courses have been included and approved on the IDP.

(2) Ensure the individual is available for school and not encumbered by excessive overtime or travel.

(3) Reimburse tuition and other funding provided if substantial travel, duties, or other training prohibit the student from successful completion of classes.

(4) Ensure that the NCR CSO is notified immediately when a change in employment no longer qualifies the employee for program participation.

6. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

- a. **Programs of Study.** The ATAP program will support the following educational pursuits: 12-24 semester hours of business required for AAC or CE membership; an undergraduate degree for the workforce; or an undergraduate or graduate degree for those workforce members that are either AAC or CE (Level III) members. All degrees should follow the disciplines that underpin the functions of the AAC. Changes to the approved course of study must be coordinated with the NCR CSO prior to funding approval for the new course.
- b. **Learning Institutions.** ATAP funding will support educational pursuits through all schools and programs of study that are nationally or regionally accredited.
- c. **Academic Standards.** Program participants must complete all courses with at least a grade of “B” in graduate courses and at least a “C” in undergraduate courses. Withdrawal from an ATAP-funded course may result in the employee being required to reimburse the government for all costs incurred with that particular course and subsequent removal from ATAP.
- d. **Nontraditional Modes of Learning.** ATAP will fund nontraditional modes of learning (courses via television, satellite, and online) when the courses are included in the program of study and are part of the school’s alternate modes of training.
- e. **College-Level Examination Program/Defense Activity for Nontraditional Education Support (CLEP/DANTES) Tests.** ATAP funding will be provided for CLEP/DANTES testing, but a nonpassing grade on any test will require reimbursement by the individual.
- f. **Electives.** Electives required as part of a degree must underpin the functions of the AAC. Electives that do not meet this requirement will not be funded by ATAP.
- g. **Payback.** Payback of time for the ATAP opportunity is as stipulated on the DD Form 1556. The length of payback is three times the length of the training period. (See Section E – Trainee Agreement/Certification of DD Form 1556 for additional information).
- h. **Attendance.** Any ATAP participant not attending scheduled courses for a period of one semester (without prior coordination with the NCR CSO) may be removed from the ATAP and required to reapply.

7. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- a. Funding for the ATAP will be centrally managed for A&TWF and AAC employees. As resources permit, educational-related expenses outlined below will be funded prior to class attendance. ATAP funds cannot be provided as reimbursement for funds expended by the student or another organization.

(1) Funding for a master’s degree or business hours at the master’s level is limited to \$1,700 per course. Business hours at the master’s level will adhere to these funding limits. Funding required above this limit is the responsibility of the ATAP participant. For those ATAP

participants who entered the program prior to FY01, the above yearly funding limitation of \$7,500 applies, regardless of the number of courses taken.

(2) Funding for a bachelor's degree is limited to \$1,000 per course. The maximum amount allowed per fiscal year is \$5,000. Business hours at the bachelor's level will adhere to these funding limits. Funding above this limit is the responsibility of the ATAP participant. For those ATAP participants who entered the program prior to FY01, the above yearly funding limitation of \$5,000 applies, regardless of the number of courses taken.

(3) Funding for books is limited to \$100 per course. Funding above this limit is the responsibility of the ATAP participant. Book costs and lab fees (if appropriate) may be included on a DD Form 1556 (provided the bookstore accepts it as a form of payment). If the bookstore does not accept a DD Form 1556 or if the required books are not available through the college bookstore, book reimbursement is authorized using an SF 1034 (Public Voucher for Purchases and Services Other Than Personal), which must be submitted with a copy of the purchase receipt. SF 1034 submissions must also include an Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) form and a voided check.

(4) Lab fees and technology fees required for course completion will be considered as part of the cost of the course

b. Registration fees, parking costs, travel expenses, entrance exams (e.g., SAT, GMAT, GRE), and all other expenses not listed in paragraph 6a are not funded by ATAP. These expenses are the responsibility of the ATAP participant.

c. Changes to pre-approved funding limits must be coordinated through the NCR CSO prior to submission of the DD Form 1556.

8. EFFECTIVE DATE, EXPIRATION DATE, AND IMPLEMENTATION

This policy is effective immediately and supersedes all previous ATAP policies. This policy expires September 30, 2005. The DDACM may issue procedures as necessary to implement this directive.



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